



Calling Madinah "Yathrib" is a sin

Written by
Abul Ameen Mobeen Attari Madani (Uk)

Reviewed by
Shaykh al-Hadith Maulana Hafiz Shafiq Madani
(khan pur, Pakistan)



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سَعِيدُ بْنُ يَسَارٍ يَقُولُ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا هُرَيْرَةَ يَقُولُ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ﷺ: أَمْرْتُ بِقَرْبَةَ تَأْكُلُ الْقَرَى، يَقُولُونَ: يَثْرِبُ، وَهِيَ الْمَدِينَةُ، تَنْفِي النَّاسَ كَمَا يَنْفِي الْكِيرُ خَبَثَ الْحَدِيدِ

Translation: Hazrat Saeed bin Yasar (رضي الله عنه) narrates that he heard Hazrat Abu Hurairah (رضي الله عنه) say: The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "I have been commanded to go to a town which will dominate other towns. People call it Yathrib, but it is actually Madinah. This (Madinah) drives away people just as a furnace removes rust from iron." (Bukhari Sharif, Chapter on the Sanctity of Madinah, Volume 2, Page 662, Al-Turath).

Commentary on Hadith

Allama Qastallani (رحمه الله عليه) (D,923 AH), while explaining this hadith in "Irshad al-Sari li Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari," says

وفي موطن ابن وهب قلت لمالك: ما تأكل القرى؟ قال: تفتح القرى. وقال ابن المنير في الحاشية، قال السهيلي في التوراة يقول الله: يا طابة يا مسكينة إني سأرفع أجاجير القرى، لأنها إذا علت عليها علوّ الغلبة أكلتها، أو يكون المراد يأكل فضلها الفضائل أي يغلب فضلها الفضائل حتى إذا قيست بفضلها تلاشت بالنسبة إليها فهو المراد بأكل. وقد جاء في مكة أنها أم القرى كما جاء في المدينة تأكل القرى، لكن المذكور للمدينة أبلغ من المذكور لمكة لأن المأمورة لا يمحى بوجودها وجود ما هي أم له، لكن يكون حق الأم أظهر. وأما قوله: تأكل القرى فمعناه أن الفضائل تض محل في جنب عظيم فضلها حتى تكاد تكون عد ما، وما يض محل له الفضائل أعظم وأفضل مما تبقى معه الفضائل.

Translation: Ibn Wahb (رحمه الله عليه) mentions in the Muwatta that he asked the lover of Madinah, Imam Malik (رحمه الله عليه), "What does it mean that Madinah will 'consume' other towns?" Imam Malik replied, "It means that Madinah will conquer other cities." Ibn Munir (رحمه الله عليه) mentioned in his commentary that Imam Suhayli (رحمه الله عليه) said that in the Torah, Allah Almighty says, "O Taybah, O Maskinah (names for Madinah), I will elevate your buildings above the buildings of other cities." This means that when Madinah gains dominance over other cities, it will prevail over them. Or it could mean that the virtue of Madinah will surpass and overshadow all other virtues, such that when

compared with Madinah, the virtues of other places will diminish, which is what "consume" means in this context.

Regarding Makkah, it is referred to as "Umm al-Qura" (the mother of cities), while for Madinah it is said that it "consumes other towns." The status mentioned for Madinah is even higher than that of Makkah because a mother does not negate the existence of what she gives birth to; rather, her importance is established. But the idea that Madinah "consumes" other towns means that in comparison to Madinah, other virtues diminish to the point that they seem to disappear. Therefore, Madinah is the greatest and most virtuous of all. (Irshad al-Sari, Volume 3, Page 331, Al-Turath).

Allama Badruddin Aini رحمة الله عليه (D,855 AH), while explaining the part of the hadith "People call it Yathrib, but it is actually Madinah," says,

”أَرَادَ أَنْ بَعْضَ الْمُنَافِقِينَ يَقُولُونَ لِلْمَدِينَةِ: يَثْرَبُ، يَعْنِي يَسْمُونَهَا بِهَذَا الْإِسْمِ، وَاسْمُهَا الَّذِي يُلْبِقُ بِهَا: الْمَدِينَةُ، وَقَدْ كَرِهَ بَعْضُهُمْ مِنْ هَذَا تَسْمِيَةِ الْمَدِينَةِ يَثْرَبَ، وَقَالُوا: مَا وَقَعَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ إِنَّمَا هُوَ حَكَايَةٌ عَنْ قَوْلِ غَيْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ، (أُمِرْتُ بِقَرْيَةٍ)، أَيِّ: أُمِرْتُ بِالْهِجْرَةِ إِلَيْهَا وَالنُّزُولِ بِهَا، فَإِنْ كَانَ قَالَ ذَلِكَ بِمَكَّةَ فَهُوَ بِالْهِجْرَةِ إِلَيْهَا، وَإِنْ كَانَ قَالَهُ بِالْمَدِينَةِ فَبِسُكَنَاهِ“

Translation: Some of the hypocrites used to call Madinah "Yathrib," meaning they referred to the city by this name, while its correct and appropriate name is "Al-Madinah." Some scholars have disliked using the name "Yathrib" for Madinah and have explained that the mention of "Yathrib" in the Quran is in the context of quoting the words of non-believers. The meaning of the hadith's words "I have been commanded to go to a town" is that the Prophet ﷺ was commanded to migrate to this town and reside there. If this statement was made in Makkah, it means he was commanded to migrate to that town, and if it was said in Madinah, it means he was commanded to reside there. (Umdat al-Qari, Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari, Volume 10, Page 235, Al-Turath).

Imam Ahmad Raza Khan رحمة الله عليه (D,1340 AH) states in Fatawa Ridawiyya:

It is mentioned that calling Madinah Tayyibah by the name "Yathrib" is impermissible, prohibited, and sinful, and the person who does so is a sinner. The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, "Whoever calls Madinah 'Yathrib' must repent, for Madinah is Tayyibah, Madinah is Tayyibah." Allama Munawi, in "Taysir Sharh Jami' al-Saghir," explains that from this hadith, it is clear that it is haram (forbidden) to call Madinah Tayyibah by the

name "Yathrib" because the Prophet ﷺ ordered repentance for saying "Yathrib," and repentance is only required for a sin.

Hazrat Allama Shaykh Abdul Haq Muhibb Dehlavi رحمة الله عليه mentions in "Ashiatul-Lam'at Sharh Mishkat" that the Prophet ﷺ named the city "Madinah" due to the people living there, gathering there, and their love for the city. He prohibited calling it "Yathrib" because this was a name from the time of ignorance, or because the word "Yathrib" is derived from "Tharib," which means destruction and corruption, and "Tathrib" means reproach and blame. Alternatively, it may be because "Yathrib" was the name of an idol or a tyrant.

Imam Bukhari رحمة الله عليه in his "Tarikh" reports a hadith that whoever says "Yathrib" once should say "Madinah" ten times as a form of expiation. The mention of "يَاهُلُّ يَثْرَب" (O people of Yathrib) in the Quran is actually a quote of the hypocrites, who used the term "Yathrib" to insult Madinah. Another narration states that anyone who says "Yathrib" should seek forgiveness from Allah and repent. Some scholars have even said that anyone who calls Madinah "Yathrib" should be punished. It's surprising that some well-known figures have used the word "Yathrib" in their poetry, but Allah knows best, and His knowledge is complete and perfect. (Fatawa Ridawiyya, Volume 21, page 116,119)

Note: The scholars of Madinah عليهم رحمة الرحمن have listed approximately 100 names for Madinah, and no other city in the world has as many names. For blessings, here are 12 of the blessed names: (1) Madinah, (2) Madinat al-Rasul, (3) Tayyibah, (4) Dar al-Abrar, (5) Tabah, (6) Mubarakah, (7) Najiyah, (8) Asimah, (9) Shafiyah, (10) Hasanah, (11) Jazirat al-Arab, (12) Sayyidat al-Buldan. (From the book "130 Stories of the Lovers of the Prophet," page 249, Maktaba al-Madinah)

Mufti Sharif al-Haq Amjadi رحمة الله عليه (D.1421 AH), while explaining the part of the hadith "Madinah drives away people just as a furnace removes rust from iron," says:

This means that Madinah expels disbelievers, hypocrites, and troublemakers. This characteristic was evident during the blessed time of the Prophet ﷺ, as seen when the tribes of 'Ukal and 'Uraynah were expelled, and the Jews were driven out. (Nuzhat al-Qari,"

Volume 3, Page 265, published by Farid Book Stall, Lahore)

From this hadith and its explanation, we learn the following points:

1. This hadith and its explanation teach us the greatness and respect due to Madinah. We should refer to Madinah by its noble and appropriate names and acknowledge its significance.
2. It shows that any bad or inappropriate name should be changed, just as the Prophet ﷺ renamed Yathrib as Madinah.
3. Madinah's characteristic of expelling troublemakers teaches us that truth always prevails over falsehood, and purity and faith should be protected from discord and hypocrisy.
4. This hadith demonstrates that some places have been granted special virtues by Allah. We should show respect and reverence for these places.
5. Understanding Madinah's Islamic history and learning from it is important for us to strengthen our faith and follow Islamic teachings.
6. This hadith teaches us to be careful with our choice of words. Understanding and adopting the preferred and disliked words of the Prophet ﷺ in our lives is our responsibility.
7. We should pray for the purity and protection of Madinah and ensure its reverence, as it is the spiritual center of Islam.
8. Loving Madinah and maintaining its sanctity is part of our faith. We should cherish the love of Madinah in our hearts and always remember its greatness.
9. Calling Madinah "Yathrib" is impermissible and sinful, and it was the way of the hypocrites because the meaning of "Yathrib" is not appropriate for the holy city of Madinah.
10. Madinah is not only a spiritual center but also geographically significant. Its central position made it a key base for Islamic conquests, from where other regions were conquered.
11. Throughout its history, Madinah has faced various trials where hypocrites and enemies of Islam were expelled. This is proof that the city has always been a protector of truth.
12. The influence and development of Madinah will surpass other cities. This teaches us that efforts to develop and strengthen the centers of Islam should continue.

13. Recognizing the greatness of Madinah, we should strive to preserve our Islamic culture and heritage. This requires educating our generations about the importance of Islamic history and Madinah.
14. Just as Madinah was kept free from discord, we should also collectively strive to keep our societies pure and free from trouble. This is essential for attaining collective blessings.
15. Some scholars argue from this hadith that Madinah is superior to Makkah.

The End

Note,

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